

system operation. In order to reduce the cost of EPL systems, only a limited amount of frequently changing information, such as price information is displayed electronically. Other less frequently changing information, such as item descriptions and product codes, is displayed through signs or overlays attached to the EPL.

Typically, a store employee must attach a new overlay each time a new product is added or when information for an existing product changes. Also, once attached, overlays must be checked to determine if their information is current and correct. Such tasks are both labor-intensive and time consuming.

Among its other advantages, the present invention provides a system and method for managing electronic price label overlays that can automatically schedule printing of new up to date overlays. To this end, a mechanism is provided to determine electronic price label information and price look-up file descriptions that have been added or changed for particular price labels. In one embodiment, additions and changes in overlay data are marked and identified by the marks to create a print data file.

The Art Rejection

The sole ground of rejection is based upon Kosarew. As addressed in greater detail below, that rejection is traversed as not supported by the relied upon art. While Kosarew describes a highly advantageous technique for automatically labeling a batch of electronic price labels consistent with a Customer Data File (CDF). See, col. 3, lines 56-67. It does not anticipate and does not make obvious the presently claimed methods and systems for updating EPL overlays once the EPLs are in operation and it is necessary to change the overlay to reflect ongoing changes in information.

Taking claim 1, by way of example, that claim addresses a "method of managing EPL overlay data as the EPL overlay data changes during operation of an EPL system". The method comprises the steps of "making a change . . .", "marking the change . . .", "recording a command to print an overlay", "reading the EPL data file for the marked change", and "creating a print file for printing an overlay containing the change".

For example, assume that Product X associated with an EPL is replaced by New Improved Product X. An operator then changes the EPL data files to reflect this change. See, for example, col. 6, lines 5 and 6. Such changes are typically ongoing. At a desired point in time, the operator enters a command to print overlay data. Changed records, such as the change from Product X to New Improved Product X are determined, as discussed, for example, at page 6, lines 17-22. A print file is created for printing an overlay containing the change, i.e., New Improved Product X.

The Official Action indicates that Kosarew "makes a change to an EPL data file and marks it" citing col. 2, line 63 through col. 3, line 10; "reads the EPL data file for the marked change" citing col. 4, lines 30-55 and col. 5, lines 53-65; and creates a print file for printing an overlay containing the change" citing col. 4, lines 37-57 and col. 6, lines 17-52. Clarification is requested.

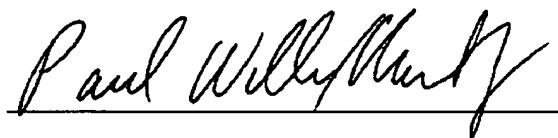
Col. 2, line 63 through col. 3, line 10 of Kosarew address the remote reprogramming of an EPL or tag 10 in a store. Col. 4, lines 30-55 and col. 5, lines 53-65, appear to address the correlation of unique record numbers (RNs) and serial numbers (SNs) in a Customer Data File (CDF). Finally, col. 4, lines 37-57 and col. 6, lines 17-52 also address the correlation of RNs and SNs with some additional discussion of how RNs may advantageously be employed in the event an EPL is defective for some reason. Quite simply, this relied upon portion of Kosarew does not

meet the present claims.

Conclusion

The present rejection should be withdrawn and the claims as presently amended should be promptly allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



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